The American Psychiatric Association stands as an advocate for access to and delivery of quality psychiatric care for aging populations. Psychiatric treatments have been shown to be effective in the management of the emotional and mental disorders of late life. While older Americans benefit from access to psychiatric treatment, they still do not have adequate access to these services.

The American Psychiatric Association endorses the following fundamental principles regarding the treatment of older Americans with psychiatric illnesses:

1. All older Americans should have access to timely psychiatric consultation and treatment.
2. Treatment of older adults with psychiatric illness must be provided with respect and compassion.
3. Psychiatric physicians caring for older adults must adhere to the ethical standards of the American Psychiatric Association and provide treatments that are appropriate and effective.
4. Psychiatric physicians have unique skills in the provision of psychotherapeutic, psychopharmacologic, social and family interventions. Elderly patients benefit when a psychiatric physician participates in a multidisciplinary treatment team for evaluation and for delivery of treatment services.
5. Additional research (basic and clinical) is necessary to develop new treatments for the elderly that are safe and effective.